

groups and sometimes with single trees, while the juniper which here abounded, and rose to a great height, gave a rich, wildness to the scene and sustained its forest character.<sup>1</sup>

For nearly twelve months, with rare and brief visits to London, Disraeli lived quietly at Bradenham. In addition to the trials of bad health the burden of his debts weighed heavily upon him. 'I am desperately ill,' he writes to Austen in November, 'and shall be in town in

a day or two, incognito of course.....Tell Madam I shall call upon her if possible, but I can only call, because I am necessarily betrayed by her and in consequence "the heathen rage most furiously." The rage of the heathen did not, however, hinder his framing large projects which called for more expenditure. He had somehow conceived the ambition of acquiring an estate and settling down to the life of a country gentleman, and at this very moment was pressing the scheme upon his father. But Isaac D'Israeli was frightened by the prevailing agricultural depression, and declined to invest his money on the advice of a son who confesses that he had 'more than once interfered with his affairs and never with any particular success.' The son, however, had another project. A year or more before he had been attracted by the career of David Alroy, the Jewish hero of the twelfth century, and he had begun the novel on this subject which he completed and published some years later ; and his awakening interest in the history of his race had aroused in him a passionate longing to seek rest for his troubled mind and body in the East. At first his father would not hear of it.

*To Benjamin Austen.*

BRADENHAM,

Dec. 8, 1829.

MY DEAR AUSTEN,

. . . I am sorry to say that my other  
and still more  
important plan prospers as badly. I have  
partly broken it,  
and it was at once fairly knocked on the head  
in a calmer  
manner than I should have expected from my  
somewhat rapid

<sup>1</sup> *Endymion*, ch. 11.